

***Podagrion splendens* (Spinola, 1811)  
(Hymenoptera, Chalcidoidea) – a new record of  
Torymidae from Malta**

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The Family Torymidae is represented by 986 described species worldwide. Many species oviposit through plant tissue, usually into plant galls or developing seeds, but some oviposit into pupae. Torymid larvae may be entomophagous or, less commonly, phytophagous; some may even be both, feeding in turn on gall inducer and gall tissue as in some Eurytomidae. The majority of species of the subfamily Toryminae, many Monodontomerinae and a few species of Megastigminae are idiobiont ectoparasitoids of the inhabitants of plant galls. A number of torymids are specialist phytophages that feed on the highly nutritious endosperm in developing seeds. They develop in seeds of various Cupressaceae, Pinaceae and arborescent Rosaceae. The genus *Podagrion* is represented by six species in the West Palaearctic (DELVARE, 2005). The genus *Podagrion* was previously unrecorded from Malta. *Podagrion* wasps are associated with the oothecae of various mantids in which they are parasitoids. Oothecae belonging to *Mantis religiosa* (Linnaeus, 1758), proved to be parasitised by *Podagrion splendens*, representing a new record for Malta. Some information on this species follows.

***Podagrion splendens* (Spinola, 1811)**

**Material examined:** Malta, Manikata, ootheca collected on 15.ii.2015, 2 ♀♀ & 3 ♂♂ emerged between 29-30.iii.2015 and 5 ♀♀ emerged between 5-8.iv.2015 from ootheca of *Mantis religiosa*; Mtaħleb, ootheca collected on 20.iii.2016, 6 ♀♀ & 1 ♂ emerged between 25-29.v.2016; Bingemma, ootheca collected on the 24.iv.2016, 5 ♀♀ & 1 ♂ emerged between 1-5.vi.2016.

**Notes:** *Podagrion splendens* is well distributed throughout Europe, ranging from North eastern countries such as the Caucasus and possibly Russia but is most commonly found throughout the Mediterranean Basin. It is a parasitoid of oothecae of various mantid species, primarily *Mantis religiosa* (GRISSELL, 1995; ASKEW *et al.*, 2001). *Podagrion splendens* females, measure around 3.4 mm in length and additionally possess an ovipositor which can be up to 1.4 times longer than the rest of the body. They possess black prominently enlarged femurs with bluish-green reflections upon the head and mesosoma; males are 2.5–2.8 mm long with similar colouration (DELVARE, 2005). Males entice females for copulation with a series of continuous and regular wing flaps and vibrations of flagella of their antennae (DELVARE, 2002).

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